

ARMY TALKS



Brains, Guts and Concrete



Restricted

ARMY TALKS is a classified official publication of the United States Army in the European Theater of Operations. The material contained herein may not be quoted or republished, in whole or in part, nor may it be communicated, directly or indirectly, to persons not authorized to receive it, except by authority of the Commanding General, ETOUSA.

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES ARMY

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

RPF/JKM/obe

AG 353 MGC

29 August, 1943

SUBJECT: Education in Military and Current Affairs

TO: Commanding General, V Corps

1. In the training of the American soldier the purely military and technical aspects are usually stressed. It is essential, however, that in addition, the soldier be mentally prepared for battle. He must know and understand the vital necessity for the successful conclusion of the war.

2. To assist in accomplishing this end, it is desired that you establish within the elements of your command a weekly Education Program to instill in all military personnel the following:

- a. Confidence in the command.
- b. Pride in service and a sense of personal participation.
- c. Knowledge of the causes and progress of the war.
- d. A better understanding of our allies.
- e. An interest in current events and their relation to the war and the establishment of the peace.

3. To further these ends, each separate unit commander will arrange to have matters of current interest as designated in paragraph 2c, d and e above, and matters of leadership and confidence in the command as indicated in paragraph 2a and b above, discussed periodically within his command. Such discussion should be by company commanders personally or by selected Officers and NCO's from the command as deemed best by the unit commander. It is desired to make it clear that the proper presentation of this material is a command function, and should be handled as such. You are authorized to devote one (1) hour of training time per week to this program.

4. The Special Service Section, SOS, ETOUSA, will prepare and distribute the material for such weekly discussions, maintaining in their discretion a reasonable balance between the significance and progress of military events and current events, relations with our allies, etc. This material will be dated and delivered sufficiently in advance for consideration by the staffs concerned at least two days before ultimate use.

5. Direct communication between your headquarters and Special Service Section, SOS, ETOUSA, is authorized in conducting this program.

6. In order to make the plan effective it will be necessary to provide and train an Education Officer of suitable rank in your headquarters, and in each of your subordinate headquarters down to and including divisions.

By command of Lieutenant General DEVERS:

RICHARD P. FISK,
Lt. Colonel, A.G.D.,
Assistant Adjutant General.

It is suggested that the discussion leader call this matter to the attention of his Commanding Officer.

ARMY TALKS

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

BRAINS, GUTS AND CONCRETE

CLOSE behind the fighting German Army, which routed the Allies on the Continent in 1940, was another Nazi force armed with the tools of the heavy construction trades. They were members of the "Organization Todt," and their mission was to build the fortifications on which the Wehrmacht would rely if, and when, the counter-attack came from across the Channel.

Todt Engineers Build A "Second Westwall"

In those days, weeks and months after Dunkirk, when Germany was confident that Britain would be beaten to her knees by the Luftwaffe, and the invasion across the Channel was a plan for the near future, Todt engineers probably wondered a little why they were hard at work erecting fortifications they would never need.

But whether they wondered or not, they and their thousands of uniformed, swastika-badged, shovel-soldiers turned to to construct a "second Westwall" from Kirkenes, near the North Cape, to the Franco-Spanish Frontier.

Into these fortifications—roughly, the plan is a chain of inter-

dependent reinforced concrete block-houses with overlapping fields of fire from steel-shuttered embrasures—went most of the cement and steel from the captured countries.

The purpose of the defense chain was, of course, to delay an attempt to invade the continent by sea. Those half-buried concrete forts, with their barbed wire, their anti-tank blocks and their supporting artillery and machine-gun positions form the outer shell of Hitler's defenses. They will have to be cracked first in any successful invasion of the continent of Europe from the West.

Maginot, Old Westwall Are Reserve Defense

Far behind the outer wall—skirting the old Franco-German border—is the second line. It consists of the French-built Maginot Line and the original German Westwall, which faces it.

By now, it is safe to assume, both the Maginot and the original Westwall have been linked into one integrated defense system with the favorite German "hedgehog" defenses wherever the terrain is favorable for their construction.

This issue of ARMY TALKS deals with German fortifications and the methods which will be used in blasting a path through them. It was prepared by a member of the ARMY TALKS staff, who gathered first-hand material in a week at an Assault Training Center in the ETO and from an account of the Todt Organization printed by the Infantry Journal.

This, then, is the two-part Second Front problem:—

(1) How to smash through the coastal defenses and envelop and defeat the main German Armies before they retire behind the Maginot - Westwall. If that should fail and any considerable portion of the German Armies in Western Europe do succeed in escaping, the second part of the operation will be:—

(2) *How to crack the Maginot-Westwall and whip the Nazis on their home grounds.

This sounds like a pretty big order. It is. Because it is so big, only the best-trained, best-equipped and best-led troops in the world can do it. To score, it will take a very big team, with fast backs and plenty of weight in the line.

The technique of pill-box busting which they will use is the result of all available information on German field defenses, plus the battle experience of North Africa, Sicily and the Italian mainland.

The United Nations troops who will be in the assault waves are

getting their special training now. Before they take off across the short strip of sea water between Great Britain and the European Coast each man will know his job—and

will have a pretty good idea of what he is going to be up against. The going will be tough—but the technique is good.

The remainder of this issue of ARMY TALKS will describe in as detailed form as security provisions permit: (1) What kind of defense works the Germans have built; and (2) how they can be taken by courageous, well-trained and properly-equipped men.

One battle-tried veteran of a crack American division, which fought in North Africa, in Sicily and in Italy, summed it up in these words:—

"Gee, Sergeant, if we'd had this kind of training before we went into Sicily . . . Well, we'd have

done the job quicker—and cheaper."

That decorated soldier may not have known it, but he put into words the policy governing the grand strategy of the United States in their coming attack—"quicker—and cheaper."

THE IDEA of attacking concrete pill-boxes, armed with machine-guns and protected by barbed wire and mine-fields, may seem like a good way to collect \$10,000—but a poor way to plan for the future. Put that way, it might sound so to an ignorant or uninformed soldier.

ANY MAN, however, who has watched or participated in a "live ammunition run" at any of the Assault Training Centers gets a much more optimistic point of view. Suddenly—on his belly and facing yards of tangled barbed wire—he will see a 15-yard path for him blown as clean as a whistle.

BLASTING shells from his own artillery smother the concrete fort in front of him. Chattering machine-guns kick up sand and dust in the danger area ahead. Then, perhaps for the first time, that man realizes that he's playing on a mighty big team, a mighty powerful team—a team which can't and won't lose the biggest game of all. This issue of ARMY TALKS will certainly suggest something of the way we'll win to men who, themselves, may not draw that exact assignment when the show starts. It will outline the procedure for men who have not yet had the special assault training, and it will serve to recall much to those who have already had the instruction. We and our people at home, as well as our friends here in Britain, will be justly proud of the men with the brains and guts to break through and win—and keep on going, first to Paris and then to Berlin.

General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, Britain's North African hero, stressed the need for speed in a recent speech when

he said that as far as he was concerned, this war had been going on a long time and he wanted to get it over with in a hurry.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, has stated several times recently that he plans to win with as little loss of life as possible.

And that's what that anonymous soldier meant when he stared out, 800 yards, at a barrage of bursting American shells that chopped up barbed wire and smothered pill-boxes—just one jump ahead of the flame throwers and the demolition men of an assault team making a live ammunition run.



Westwall" from Norway to the Spanish-French frontier. The work was done by the Todt Organization, which had

originally built roads for Hitler. Concrete blockhouses which will withstand almost anything, anti-tank belts and dug in artillery form the defenses. The United Nations have devised a scheme of attack, which, in the eyes of veterans from North Africa and Sicily and Italy, will do the job. The men who will use the plan are in training now.

From what we know of them, what are the German fortifications like? What kind of troops can break through them? How much of their ability to do so will depend on the men's confidence in their command? What clues have been given by Generals Eisenhower and Montgomery as to the principles of their attack plan?

SUMMARY I

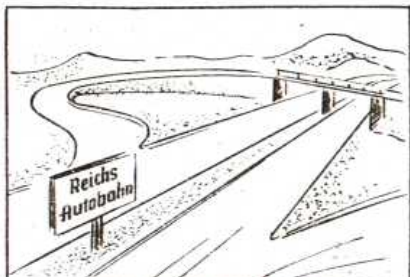
Where they won, the Germans dug in—building a "Second

Go Underground for Safety

History of Todt Organization. The "express highways" of Germany. France builds Maginot Line. Germany counters with "Westwall." Early battles no test of fortifications' strength. Hitler builds his Fortress Europe. What we face.

When Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich in 1933 one of

his most ardent supporters was the head of a big German construction firm named Fritz Todt. He had been a Nazi Party member since 1923 and *Sturmabteilung* (Storm Troop) man since '31. Unlike many business and professional men who became avowed Nazis, Todt was a thoroughly capable and successful man in his own field—engineering.



"THE ROAD TO WAR"

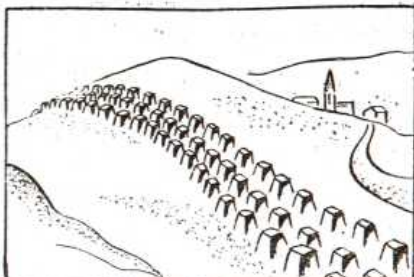
His Nazi background was so good, and his services so valuable, that party honor after honor was heaped upon him. At one time he even held more Nazi offices than Goering himself.

Builds Road Network

With Hitler in power, Todt was able to cash in on his record as an "old fighter." The Fuehrer gave Todt the profitable assignment of building the network of "express highways" which used to impress tourists with the "good job that fellow Hitler is doing."

Although they were always described as "a work of peace," the fact is that the "express highways" formed a net of military roads, intended primarily for the use of the Army in the war which even then was being planned.

The only reason they were not carried further was, it is believed, the realization on the part of the German General Staff that if Germany went to war with an enemy more plentifully supplied with motor transport, those very roads would be broad avenues of invasion. The road-building program slowed down — waiting for the German arms



"DRAGONS TEETH"

industry to motorize the Wehrmacht.

In the meantime France, alarmed at the rise of Hitler and his party, rushed the Maginot Line to completion.

Hitler called upon Todt to build a counter-defense line, facing the Maginot. Upon foundations started by German military engineers in 1936, Todt began, in late May and June of 1938, his biggest piece of work to date.

Organization Shaped

Private industry was drained of equipment, workers were assembled and the "Organization Todt" came into being in its present form. A third of all the concrete mixers in Germany was turned over to Todt; 15,000 trucks were assigned; the German railroads made available 6,000, later 8,000, cars a day.

Work started on July 20, 1938, with 35,000 men on the job. A week later the Todt payrolls carried 45,000 names and from then on the organization snowballed until on October 6 342,000 men were employed. By December, 1939, the West-wall was finished, Hitler was satisfied and Todt had



gained enormous experience in military fortification building.

Todt Dies In Crash

With the outbreak of war, Todt was commissioned a major general (reserve) in the German Air Force but early in 1942, before he could really take his place in the Nazi war set-up, he was killed in an airplane accident.

Todt's death did not disrupt the huge organization he had built. The leadership passed to an architect and engineer named Speer, another favorite of Hitler's.

Service in the OT took on a more military character, employees wore brown uniforms with swastika arm bands and the whole outfit became something like an auxiliary corps of engineers — but with the flexibility at the top which their civilian status gave Todt heads.

The biggest job the OT has been called upon to do since the death of its founder was the construction of the so-called "Second Westwall." This is the line of fortifications intended to defend the European coast from Norway to Spain.

Its basis, like that of the Westwall

from which it gets its name, is a series of concrete strongpoints, so placed that their fields of fire overlap. They are strengthened by supporting machine gun positions and protected by minefields, bands of barbed wire and concrete and steel tank barriers. Artillery positions to the rear give supporting fire.

Perhaps because the most spectacular United Nations victories have been won, except for the Eastern Front, in territory where only hasty field fortifications were encountered, there is a tendency on the part of many officers and men alike to think that the assault of strongly-held positions will present a new and much more difficult kind of warfare. They forget that the Germans breached the supposedly "attack-proof" Maginot Line — although the main Battle of France was fought by troops who skirted the defense

zone. The Russians have met long-emplaced German troops — and broken through.

Forts Can Be Captured

These two facts—that the Germans broke through the Maginot Line and that the Russians pierced Nazi defences in the East—mean that



determined troops, properly trained, equipped and led can and do capture even the strongest forts of concrete and steel.

French Could Have Attacked Westwall

The fact that the French, in the early days of the war, never reached anything but the outer fringes of the German Westwall, means only that their plan of campaign did not call for a determined attack. It does not mean that such an attack could not have been made.

There are certain facts regarding any fixed fortification, such as a blockhouse, which make it easy prey for an attacker if he has the correct weapons and uses them properly. First and foremost is the fact that it cannot move. Once an enemy blockhouse is located and identified, it remains a target for everything the attacker has.

Already there have been proofs of this weakness.

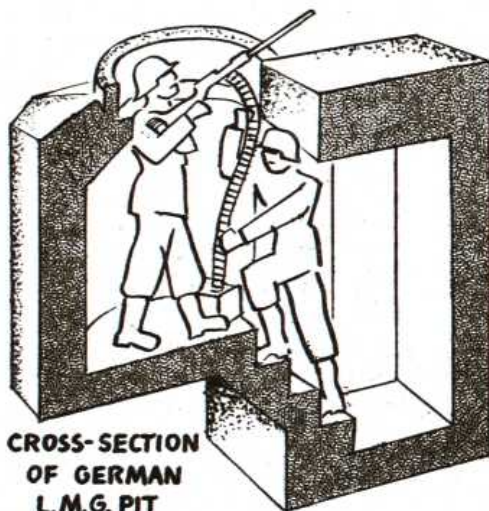
Although they did not form a long fortified zone like the Westwall or the Maginot Line, the defenses of Sevastopol, on the Russian Front, were as strong as anything made of steel and concrete can reasonably be. Yet the defense points were blotted out, one by one. At Stalingrad, however, early bombing reduced most of the city to a mass

of ruins in which the Russians located their machine guns and light mortars. There were no fixed targets for the German guns to blast.

Applying this to the Atlantic Wall and the Westwall, it becomes apparent that, all other things being equal, the defense does not really have anywhere near the superiority which might at first be imagined.

When the assault troops go into the beaches, probably the first thing they will encounter will be barbed

wire entanglements at the high-water mark since, so far, no satisfactory method has been found of building under-water barbed wire entanglements which tide and storm breakers will not wash away or tear down eventually.



Block Houses Are On Rising Terrain

Behind them, minefields may be encountered, then more wire. As the ground rises, the first of the blockhouses will be met. They will probably be dug into the forward slopes of hills or ridges, with steel-shuttered embrasures through which machine guns and light artillery will fire toward the beaches.

A second and perhaps third line of these pillboxes will support the



first. It is only reasonable to assume that light machine guns, from camouflaged slit-trench positions, will cover the "fortlets."

Guns Unlimited

There is no limit, within reason, to the number of embrasures and the number of guns which one of these strong points can have. It would hardly be practical, however, to build them too big, since the bigger they are the easier they would be to locate and the better target they would present.

Depending on the nature of the terrain, the forward defense zone of minefields, wire and blockhouses would be perhaps 2,000 yards in depth. What controls it is the distance back from the water line from which direct fire from small arms and machine guns may be laid on the beach itself.

It is in this 2,000-yard zone that the landing battle will develop. Here it is that the first victory must be won. And it is here that the technique by which heavy bands of barbed wire, minefields, machine gun posts and concrete blockhouses are overcome, will be used. Once

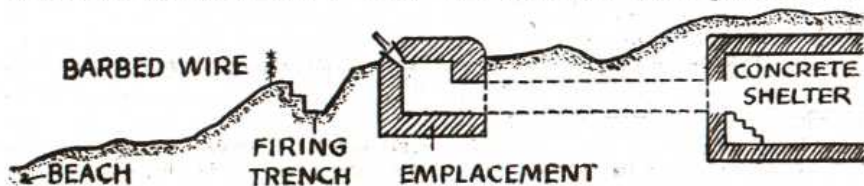
that area is cleared of enemy fire, the rest of the landing can be carried out.

Only when the beaches, and the 2,000-yard zone behind them, have been "disinfected" can the heavy equipment be landed. Always in such operations there is a critical moment when a determined counter-attack, by a large enough force of enemy armor, can imperil the landing.

It happened at Salerno, in Italy, and jubilant German radio broadcasters announced that the Allied landing force had been pushed back into the sea. It hadn't been—but it took quick thinking and faster action by the Allied commanders, American and British, to ward off the blow and make the landings stick.

From Salerno to Tarawa

It is a long way from Salerno to the South Pacific, but the bits of information—picked up at first hand in the fighting in both areas—have yielded a fairly composite picture of what the enemy's shore fortifications are like. In the Pacific island fighting, the great battleships of the American Fleet pounded the



shore line for hours with their heaviest guns.

We Learned Lesson From Island Japs

But when the Marines waded ashore at Tarawa, Jap machine guns opened up—just as if there hadn't been any 14- and 16-inch shells churning up the coral sand and smashing the palm trees into match wood. We learned a lesson from that.

Some enemy blockhouses, drenched with fire from flame-throwers and blasted by demolition charges, were still able to return fire. When they were finally taken their secret was divulged. Information from Africa, from Sicily and from Italy; information from Russia and from the South Pacific; information from Attu and Kiska; even information from the Germans themselves, is available.

Trained American officers, who had lived for long periods of time in Germany—who had superimposed a thorough knowledge of the language and customs of Germany before the war on their own technical training—pored over German Army publications, picking up a hint here, a clue there.

"Paralysis Gas" Myth

They found out how the Germans had reduced the supposedly "impregnable" Belgian fortress of Eben Emael in the early months of the war—from what the Germans themselves said about the assault of fortified positions.

They discovered that the dreaded "paralysis gas," which the Nazis were supposed to have used, was sheer fantasy.

All this battlefield information,

all the results of this research, now form the basis for the training which the assault troops are getting.

The next section of this ARMY TALKS pamphlet will outline, so far as security provisions permit, what all this boils down to. What must be done to take a German hedgehog is no secret to the Germans. Exactly how we will do it they will discover in due course of time—and that means the hard way, not from an American Army publication like ARMY TALKS.

SUMMARY 2

Hitler's European defenses were built for him by the huge Todt Organization, which gained experience making roads, went on to construct the Westwall, and finally was given the job of making the coast secure from Norway to Spain. Barbed wire, minefields, tank-barriers and concrete blockhouses are what the enemy relies on. Information from all the world's battle fronts makes up the picture, and to provide the answer to the biggest question of all: "How can we crack it?"

Is the Todt Organization still controlled by its founder? If not, who does run it? Have either the French Maginot Line or the German Westwall had a real test in this war? What is the weakness of a fixed fortification? Where are blockhouses most likely to be encountered? What controls the area which must be taken in the first assault? What is the chief danger in a landing, and how can it be met?



How to Capture a Pillbox

The Assault Team, its make-up, mission and weapons. The successive stages of an attack. The role of supporting arms. Combat Engineers and tanks. Combat communications. Re-organizing the position against armored counter-attack.

Any soldier using intelligence and imagination can take a pencil and a sheet of paper and draw a pretty fair plan for a hedgehog position on the basis of what has been said in the preceding passage.

In doing so, he would locate wire, mines and pillboxes in such a manner as to make an attack look almost impossible.

If every reader of this pamphlet will, for the time being, consider that he is the commanding officer of an amphibious force with orders to make a landing on a fortified enemy coast, he will be able to follow constructively these paragraphs.

If he will establish an atmosphere in which the members of his discussion group consider themselves as junior officers or non-coms of

assault teams, much will be gained from the remaining pages.

The problem would resolve itself, roughly, into these factors:—

How can I get enough men and enough equipment ashore, at the designated point, to take and hold a beach-head?

Long range shelling, from ships at sea, and bombardment from the air, would be the first part of the answer. But in Tarawa, Navy guns and planes didn't knock out the Jap machine guns. The bombardment did, however, serve to keep the defenders under cover and hamper their defensive moves.

Advance Shelling Helps

So the commander of an assaulting force would be justified in assuming that shelling and bombing, while it might not be the final answer would, nevertheless, permit assault troops to get to close quarters.

The bombardment does provide advance cover for the attack.

As the barrage must be lifted before the men in the landing boats can set foot on the beach, naturally a question arises:

What's to prevent the defenders from staying under cover until the



barrage moves inland, and then coming up with machine guns to spray the crowded barges before they reach the beach and unload?

Assault Team Fire Keeps Foe Ducking

It is a reasonable question. The answer is that the smoke, dust and general confusion of those critical few minutes are just enough—with the split-second timing of modern attack technique—to allow the assault teams to get to the beach, take cover and open fire themselves. Then their own rifle, rocket, mortar and Browning Automatic Rifle fire takes over the job of keeping the enemy at the bottom of his deepest holes.

Barbed-Wire First Job

It is known that permanent barbed-wire installations have been seldom used successfully below the high-water mark. Anything may happen, however, so the landing teams must be prepared for unexpected obstacles. Shells from the naval bombardment will have churned up the beach, providing ready-made foxholes for the troops whose first job will probably be to tackle barbed-wire defenses at the high water mark or just above it.

What is needed, then, is a technique for cutting a path through the barbed wire—and finding a way through the minefields which will probably be found behind it.

But the dust and smoke are blowing away now and the enemy, if we let him, will come crawling out of his deep dugouts to man machine guns covering his own wire.

A couple of BAR teams—especially if they are aided by light artillery on or near the beach—can make that a very unhappy performance for the enemy machine gunners, and one which has practically no future.

BAR Team Tactics Resembles Football

Here the analogy to a football play becomes very clear. If the BAR teams, by keeping up their fire, can “take out” the enemy “tacklers,” then the man with the demolition “ball” can get his Bangalore torpedoes under the wire—and blow a 15-foot path through it as clean as a pool table.

With a clear path through the wire, first one and then another BAR team can move up, along with mortar men, bazooka gunners and riflemen. Their major objective is the concrete pillbox, somewhere ahead, which anchors the defense

of that area and which they must knock out to secure the beach.

If additional bands of wire are encountered, the process is repeated. Yard by yard, from shell-hole to shell-hole, advance elements of the assault team work upon the pillbox. As they get closer to the target they are able to act as more and more accurate spotters—"bird-dogging" the target for the mortar, the BARs and their own tank.

"Heat-Up" Embrasure

At last they reach the vantage point from which flame-throwers can "heat-up" the embrasure. Bazooka rockets and rifle grenades will have already chewed it up to some extent and the defenders will probably be crouched against the inside walls, out of reach of stray rifle or machine gun bullets which might skitter through jammed embrasure flaps.

Suddenly their whole world will dissolve in leaping red flames—flames which blind the vision slits and consume the oxygen inside the crowded concrete blockhouse. If their steel ports are still functioning they will slam them shut to keep out the red horror from the flame throwers.

The instant the flame thrower stops, even before the fire itself has died away, demolition men place charges against the steel.

Seconds later the charge is fired and before the dust and debris have settled another jet of flame wreathes the embrasure again. Back and forth, in and out—it is a fast one-two punch with a terrific wallop leaving the defenders groggy, shaken and punch-drunk—if they haven't been killed outright.

By-Pass Pillbox, Take up Position

In the meantime BAR teams and riflemen have by-passed the pillbox and have taken up positions behind and to either side. Back toward the beach, engineers have cleared a path through the minefields, if any were encountered, and the supporting tanks are moving up.

When and if the counter-attack develops, as it did at Salerno, armored units, anti-tank guns and infantry armed with weapons which make a tank a rolling deathtrap will all be in position to meet and defeat it.

Touchdown In Berlin

It is a power play and it's got to be perfect.

But when it is perfect—when our four star quarter-back calls the signal and the play winds up in a touchdown in Berlin—then the discharge date for most of us will be



a lot closer. All our hard work and training will have been worth it!

SUMMARY 3

Men with guns, brains and guts—that's the combination for a successful attack on the enemy's fortified coastline. We've got the guns. The men are here—and more are arriving almost daily. Special assault training is quickening their

brains and toughening their guts. They're members of a big team with a winning play, and all they need now is the starting whistle.

What is the objective of a beach landing? What are the devices which the enemy might be expected to use in an effort to thwart it? What are some of the weapons used in such an attack? How does it resemble a football play?



Preparation

THE business of attack in the final stages lies in the brains and hands and feet of the infantry. It is their business and was never more so than today. But the planning involved in taking any network of fortifications includes air power, artillery and armored forces, together with a fine sense of training and coordination among all arms.

Everyone of us is concerned in the offensive regardless of where that offensive is to be or what part we as individuals are to play. As being a well-informed soldier makes for an efficient soldier, being well informed in the art and craft of modern warfare becomes essential to victory.

This issue of ARMY TALKS is therefore devoted to a play-by-play analysis of fortifications—German fortifications—and the way we are going to take them. It will be no picnic—in fact it is going to be a pretty dirty business, but never before in the history of the American Army have we had so many well-equipped and highly-trained men prepared to take on the job and carry it through. Furthermore, in no other issue of ARMY TALKS have we given so factual an account of fighting cooperation. This is all in a common cause and to a common purpose. All of us are in this together—to fight together and to win together.

The discussion leader will be placed on his mettle in preparing for this topic. He should read the article with care, jotting down the main points of information on which to hinge his introductory remarks. He will be advised to make his remarks brief and provocative. If he can prevail upon the engineers or the S-3, ask them with three or four men in the

group to set up a relief map indicating the salient features of a modern fortification—sea, sand, barbed wire, pillboxes, entrenched walls and hidden gun positions. It can be done very simply with clay or sand, or even with dampened dirt and fragments of mirror. Then ask an officer from the engineers or S-2 to come to the discussion and make clear the phases of attack.

If the discussion leader is in an infantry, artillery, tank, engineer or anti-tank outfit he will have plenty of men available to call upon in initiating suggestions and questions. If he is in a service, medical, airborne, or airforce station, he may have to work a bit harder to get the group moving, but the interest will be just as keen. He may be able to invite a non-com or officer from a neighboring infantry or armored unit to come in and aid the discussion. But he should always keep it in mind—we are all in this thing together and the way we cooperate, the way we pool our resources and our knowledge, will have a definite effect on the outcome.

Finally, the discussion leader after his lead-off talk of eight to ten minutes must function as chairman and arbiter. He cannot dominate the discussion, nor should he permit any other members of the group to do so. He should attempt to gain the interest and confidence of all members. The indifferent man dozing in a corner is just as important to the success of the hour as are the half-dozen who are constantly ready to contribute their opinions. If the discussion leader has set up an outline on a blackboard or piece of brown paper, he should stick to it. Five minutes before the close of the hour he should summarize the discussion and point out the main findings—both points of agreement and of disagreement.



QUESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION

The following questions may prove useful in setting the pace of discussion. Three or four of these can be initiated by members of the group. The leader will gain the cooperation of most of the group if over a period of six or seven meetings he calls for the support of nearly every man to make the discussion go.

Q. Which force has the greater advantage—offensive or defensive ? Why ?

Q. What lessons have the United Nations learned from the history of the Maginot Line ?



Q. What is the extent of the "Second Westwall" ?

Q. Why is the problem of the Second Front described as two-fold ?
What are the two parts of the problem of breaking the enemy's fortifications ?

Q. What are the essential weaknesses of fortifications ?

Q. How does teamwork enter into the success of beach assaults and smashing fortifications ?

The discussion leader will find additional material to supplement his reading on this subject in recent issues of *Time*, *Life* and *Yank*. The March 13 (pp. 9-13) issue of *Time* ; the March 26 (pp. 3-4) issue of *Yank*, are pertinent. Moreover, the discussion leader has rarely had a topic in which pride in service, confidence in the command, understanding of our allies and a knowledge of the causes and progress of the war are more implicit. Without over-emphasis they are suggested throughout.

When leaders are not receiving copies of ARMY TALKS they should get in touch with their Special Service Officer, or the field representative, of *Stars and Stripes*. Distribution is on the basis of four to one hundred men. Copies are initially intended for the use of the discussion leaders. After the discussion they should be made available to all the men.

ARMY TALKS :—The PURPOSE of ARMY TALKS is to help American officers and enlisted personnel become better-informed men and women and therefore better soldiers.

ARMY TALKS are designed to stimulate discussion and thought, and, by their very nature, thus may often be controversial in content. They are not to promote or to propagandize any particular causes, beliefs or theories. Rather, they draw upon all suitable sources for fact and comment, in the American tradition, with each individual retaining his American right and heritage so far as his own opinion is concerned.

THEREFORE, the statements and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily verified by, nor do they necessarily reflect the opinions of, the United States Army.

THE SOURCE OF MATERIAL must therefore be made clear at each discussion. All written material appearing in this publication has been written and edited by uniformed members of the Army and/or Navy, except where it is stated that a civilian or other outside source is being quoted.

